

## McKinney-Vento Act and Homeless Students

**Program Description:** The McKinney-Vento Act is the federal law that outlines the rights of children and youth in homeless situations, and provides detail regarding the duties of local school districts in providing service to those students. The intent of the McKinney-Vento Act is to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. There are four main areas of focus in the McKinney-Vento Statement of Policy regarding the education of homeless children and youth:

1) Each state shall ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to education, 2) States must address barriers that would keep homeless children and youth from receiving equal access to a public school education, 3) Homeless children and youth are not to be segregated from their non-homeless peers, and 4) Homeless children and youth should have opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. **The law further requires that districts be aware of the following:**

- Districts must review and revise policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth.
- Every LEA shall have a designated homeless liaison to ensure that homeless children and youth are identified, enrolled in, and successful in school. Mrs. Bales is designated as the KSD liaison.
- SEA and LEAs are required to adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian to and from the school of origin. The LEA must provide or arrange for transportation. If the student moves to an area served by another LEA, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin, the LEA of origin and the LEA in which the student is living must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation back to the school of origin. If the LEAs cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.
- The LEA must, according to the child or youth's best interest, continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness.
- School records must be made readily available.
- Students must be enrolled immediately, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.
- In the event of enrollment disputes, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute; the parent or guardian shall be provided with a written explanation; the child, youth, parent or guardian shall be referred to the LEA liaison who will carry out dispute resolution; additional related requirements. Dispute Resolution Process at the OSPI website: <http://www.k12.wa.us/ConsolidatedReview/SamplePolicies/DisputeResolutionProcess.pdf>
- In determining the best interest of the child or youth, the LEA shall keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the parent or guardian; provide a written explanation regarding the right to appeal; in the case of an unaccompanied youth, ensure that the homeless liaison assists in placement or enrollment decisions.

- Comparable services including transportation, educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria; programs in vocational and technical education; programs for gifted and talented students; and school nutrition programs.
- LEAs shall coordinate with local social service agencies and others in providing services with homeless children and youth, including coordination with housing assistance.

If you need further information or support please contact Laura Bales (Counselor/McKinney Vento officer) of the Klickitat School District telephone number: 509-369-4145, or visit the OSPI website; <http://www.k12.wa.us/HomelessEd/AssistanceAct.aspx>